

fidential picture of the international situation as
 he saw it—in a
 speech, printed in our sixth volume, delivered at
 a meeting of
 the Committee of Imperial Defence on May 26,
 1911,
 to
 which the Dominion delegates to the Imperial
 Conference
 were invited. Separate Dominion navies, he
 began, necessi-
 tated a common foreign policy for the Empire,
 generally
 understood and approved. What really
 determined our
 policy was the question of sea-power. Next to our
 navy, we
 had sought safety in terminating our quarrels
 with France and
 Russia. Unfortunately our relations with
 Germany deterior-
 ated as those with France and Russia improved.
 If, as he
 hoped, an improvement occurred, it would have
 to be a
 friendship into which we could take our friends.
 There was
 only one danger—that some Power or group of
 Powers
 should pursue what he called the Napoleonic
 policy, separating
 other States from each other, crushing them one
 by one, and
 forcing them into its orbit. In such an event
 the weaker
 Powers would appeal to us to help them. " Our
 hands are
 free. . . . But I do feel this very strongly, that if
 such a
 situation should arise, and there was a risk of all
 the Powers or
 a group of Powers acquiring such a dominating
 position in
 Europe that it would be the arbiter, not only of
 peace or war,
 but of the diplomacy of all the other Powers of
 Europe, and
 if while that process was going on we were
 appealed to for
 help and sat by and looked on and did nothing,
 then people
 ought to realize that the result would be one
 great combination
 in Europe, outside which we should be left
 without a friend.
 . . . There will be no aggression on our part. If
 we are ever
 involved in trouble, it will not be for the sake of
 any ideas of
 aggrandisement or ambition or any other vain
 empty things
 of that kind."

After thus proclaiming the orthodox doctrine

of naval
supremacy and the balance of power, Grey
proceeded, to
survey the map of Europe. We were on the best
of terms with
France and Russia. With Austria our relations
were quite
good, though we seldom came in contact with
her. With
Italy we had always been excellent friends. With
Germany
there was only one difficulty, the fleet, but it was
a very great
one. France and Russia were most peacefully
disposed, and
we were continually explaining that we did not
wish them to
have a quarrel with Germany : " You need be
under no
apprehension that our relations with France and
Russia will
ever be made a cause of provocation in policy.
If Germany